

AGENDA



Thursday, May 17, 2007

**Fire
RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL ACTION****Item No. 5**

Subject: Authorize acceptance of grant funds in the amount of \$71,147 from the United States Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program for Fire Prevention and Safety; and amend the Fiscal Year 2006-2007 Austin Fire Department Operating Budget Special Revenue Fund of Ordinance No. 20060911-001 to appropriate \$71,147 for the purpose of purchasing smoke alarms and publicizing the availability of these resources to a targeted population.

Amount and Source of Funding: Funding is available from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Department of Homeland Security, Assistance to Firefighters Grant Fire Safety and Prevention Program. An in-kind match of \$17,787 is required and available in the Austin Fire Department Fiscal Year 2006-2007 Operating Budget. The grant period is April 13, 2007 to April 12, 2008. There is no unanticipated fiscal impact.

Fiscal Note: A fiscal note is attached.

For More Information: Assistant Chief Flo Soliz, 974-4100.

These grant funds will be used in the effort to prevent the incidence of fire deaths, especially among the elderly and low-income populations, in response to the high number of fire deaths in the City of Austin in 2006. There are approximately 19,000 single family residences built before 1980 with heads of households aged 60 or older; and 26,000 owner-occupied residences with household income less than \$35,000. This federal grant will provide the funds to purchase, distribute, and install 2,500 low-maintenance smoke detectors in both single family residences with older heads of households, as well as low-income single-family residences in Austin, at no cost to recipients. The smoke detectors will be equipped with various special needs features as appropriate, such as strobe lights that alert deaf and hearing-impaired individuals to fires in their homes, and remote control devices that allow seniors with limited mobility to test their smoke detectors without the risk of injury in attempting to reach a smoke detector.

The Austin Fire Department will partner with local Meals-on-Wheels programs, senior service providers such as Family Eldercare, and local churches to distribute smoke detectors to qualifying seniors. A television and radio campaign to inform Austin residents about eligibility for smoke detectors is scheduled to begin in the next several months with the distribution of smoke detectors to occur shortly thereafter.